

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant responds herein to the Office Action dated March 14, 2007.

The applicants' attorneys appreciate the Examiner's thorough search and remarks.

As a result of the present amendment, claims 13-30 are currently pending in the instant application.

Claims 29 and 30 have been added.

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has indicated that claim 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of claim 13 and any intervening claims (i.e., claims 15 and 17). Accordingly, new claim 28 includes the allowable subject matter of claim 18 and the subject matter of claims 13, 15, and 17. Allowance is respectfully requested.

Independent Claims 13 and 27 have been rejected as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,627,583 (Nakamura) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,831,444 (Kato). Reconsideration is requested.

According to an aspect of the present application, as recited by the claims, a drive signal for driving a solid-state image pickup device is generated and thereafter delayed in accordance with a delay time. Then, the delayed drive signal is transmitted to the solid-state image pickup device. In other words, the drive signal is delayed in accordance with the delay time before it is transmitted to the solid-state image pickup device. Accordingly, amended claim 13 recites an adjusting circuit including a timing adjusting section for performing timing adjustment of the drive signal by receiving and thereafter delaying the drive signal generated by the drive signal generating section in accordance with a delay time and transmitting the delayed drive signal to the solid-state image pickup device such that the output signal to be inputted to the general-purpose video signal processing circuit has a correct timing.

In the rejection, although the Examiner acknowledges that Nakamura does not disclose an adjusting circuit including a timing section for performing timing adjustment of the drive signal, the Examiner states that the synchronization signal generating circuit (77), as disclosed by Nakamura, is used for "adjusting" (e.g., see, Office Action, pp. 3-4). However, with reference to col. 9, lines 4-11, Nakamura teaches the synchronization signal generation circuit (77) is

designed to generate a synchronization signal required for each circuit. In other words, a "[s]ystem clock outputted to each synchronization circuit and timing signals required for each circuit are generated by a synchronization signal generation circuit 22 and output to each circuit" (e.g., see, col. 5, lines 14-20 and FIGs. 4 and 8). Nakamura does not teach or suggest that the synchronization circuit transmits the generated drive signal, delaying the drive signal in accordance with a delay time, and transmitting the delayed drive signal to the solid-state image pickup device, as taught by the present application and recited by the claims.

Further, with reference to FIG. 8C, Kato teaches a delay circuit (36). However the delay circuit (36) receives an output signal (17) of a CCD (20) (which the Examiner equates with the solid-state image pickup device, as recited by the claims of the present application). Accordingly, as taught by Kato, it is the output (as opposed to an input) of the CCD (20) which is delayed. This contrasts with the present invention in which a drive signal for driving a solid-state image pickup device is delayed in accordance with a delay time before the delayed drive signal is transmitted to the solid-state pickup device.

Moreover, claim 13 recites, *inter alia*, a video signal output connector for outputting the standard video signal outputted from the general-purpose video signal processing circuit to an external display unit. In the Office Action, the Examiner states that the video signal output connector is disclosed by the camera control unit (3) of Nakamura. With reference to FIG. 3, Nakamura teaches a camera control unit located outside of the electronic endoscope (1, 2). However, as recited by claim 13, the video signal output connector for outputting the standard video signal outputted from the general-purpose video signal processing circuit to an external display unit, is part of the endoscope. Thus, Nakamura fails to disclose the video signal output connector as recited in claim 13.

Regarding claim 14, on page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner states "[R]egarding claim 14, Nakamura et al discloses video processing circuit ... disposed in an operation section ... (Fig. 2)... it would have been considered obvious to one of skill in the art" (Office Action, Page, bottom, emphasis removed). However, with reference to FIG. 2 of Nakamura, the camera control unit in Nakamura is provided outside of the endoscope (1,2). Accordingly, Nakamura does not teach or suggest the general-purpose video signal processing circuit and the adjusting

circuit are disposed in an operational section arranged at a proximal end of the insert section, as recited by claim 14. Reconsideration is requested.

Claim 27 includes recitations which are similar to those contained in claim 1, and is allowable for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to the rejection of claim 13.

Moreover, claim 27 recites a first adjusting circuit including a first timing adjusting section for performing timing adjustment of the drive signal generated by the first drive signal generating section by receiving and thereafter delaying the drive signal generated by the first drive signal generating section in accordance with a first delay time and transmitting the corresponding delayed drive signal to the first solid-state image pickup device such that the output signal to be inputted to the first general-purpose video signal processing circuit has a correct timing; and a second adjusting circuit including a second timing adjusting section for performing timing adjustment of the drive signal generated by the second drive signal generating section by receiving and thereafter delaying the drive signal generated by the second drive signal generating section in accordance with a second delay time and transmitting the corresponding delayed drive signal to the second solid-state image pickup device such that the output signal to be inputted to the second general-purpose video signal processing circuit has a correct timing, which is neither taught nor suggested by either Nakamura or Kato or the combination thereof.

Accordingly, as Kato does not cure the deficiencies of Nakamura, the combination of Nakamura and Kato fails to render claims 13 and 27 obvious. Reconsideration is requested.

Claims 14-26 depend from claim 13 either directly or indirectly. Each claim includes other limitations which in combination with those claim 13 are not shown or suggested by the art of record. Reconsideration is requested.

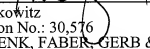
New claims 29 and 30 include limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by the cited art of record.

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Max Moskowitz
Registration No.: 30,576
OSTROLENK, FABER, GERB & SOFFEN, LLP
1180 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036-8403
Telephone: (212) 382-0700